



Chairo Christian School

Kindergarten 2018

PAKENHAM CAMPUS
ELC Information Booklet

*Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it. **Proverbs 22:6 ESV***

*The beginning of something is always very important; especially when it's young and needs time to grow. **Plato***

*The words (of Plato) challenge us to remember that childhood is the beginning phase of life, and that time is needed to nurture, guide and support children as they grow. **Kathy Walker***

Chairo's mission statement reflects our desire to work in partnership with families. We seek to provide an education that allows each child to reach their full God-given potential. This is achieved while providing parents with an environment in which they can maintain and exercise their scriptural authority and responsibility for their children.

OUR MISSION

We seek to provide excellence in Christ-centred education, in partnership with families, within a caring Christian community.

OUR VISION

We long to see Christ's redemptive impact in the world through the capability, character and commitment of our students.



Kindergarten Philosophy

In early childhood education, the curriculum is not the focus—the children are. We feel that a meaningful, integrated, emerging curriculum linking to the Early Years Learning Framework (Belonging, Being and Becoming) is the most beneficial to children's learning across all developmental domains.

Play is the main focus of learning, as children journey through life to explore the beauty of God's love and their uniqueness as created beings made in His image.

The programs we offer are carefully and thoughtfully planned to properly cover all five learning outcomes stated. These are: Identity, Community, Wellbeing, Learning and Communication.

Within the five learning outcomes, we embrace the eight Practice Principles from the Victorian Early Years Learning Framework, which have been identified to support and sustain practice to enhance children's development towards achieving the learning outcomes. These include:

- family-centred practice;
- partnerships with professionals;
- high expectations for every child;
- equity and diversity;
- respectful relations and responsive engagement;
- integrated and intentional teaching and learning approaches;
- assessment for learning and development; and
- reflective practice.

IDENTITY

At Chairo, we believe that building a strong sense of identity in children can be accomplished through:

- an understanding of who God is as the Creator of mankind and the natural world (Genesis 1:26–27);
- an understanding of who they are as beings created in the image of their Maker, therefore being unique and valued; and
- an understanding of their responsibilities towards others: care, empathy and respect.

COMMUNITY

At Chairo, we believe that as children are part of humanity they are equal before God, born into families by God's design

(Genesis 2:24–25) and belonging to community groups at large. Children are capable and competent, and they are able to contribute to the community by becoming the people and fulfilling the purposes that God has designed for them.

Some of the ways in which children contribute to the community within the ELC (Early Learning Centre) include:

- taking on tasks in groups (initiating and then following direction);
- volunteering to ask and answer questions (contributing to learning);
- sharing and taking turns; and
- showing concern and care for others.

WELLBEING

At Chairo, we believe that, although all people are born into a fallen world and are therefore sinful (Romans 3:23), children are able to grow and be nurtured in a healthy way through the development of strong relationships with the greater school community, parents and extended family, and the community at large, as well as a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. Such growth and nurture is evident through development in a range of areas:

- Physically – fine, gross motor skills and coordination
- Emotionally – resilience and healthy self-concept
- Spiritually – understanding that this is God’s world and they have purpose and value within God’s plan

LEARNING

For children, learning is a process of discovering about God, the world and who they are, through ‘guided unfolding’ by teachers and parents. Children are active learners who learn best when they are encouraged to be involved, given choices, and presented with a variety of opportunities. The natural curiosity and creativity of children are fostered by encouraging them to use their five senses to explore the world around them: to inquire, plan, collaborate, and grapple with and solve problems.

COMMUNICATION

Through the development of relationships that are built on the basis of a relationship with God and collaborating with parents, being positive, encouraging, inclusive and purposeful, children will be able to express themselves verbally and in other ways through a variety of experiences, such as visual arts, performing arts and literacy.

Curriculum Framework

PURPOSE OF THE KINDERGARTEN YEARS

Chairo's motto has long been 'Learning with God' and, as the platform of learning in our school, the ELC is an essential part of that. Laying foundations as we *learn with God* is certainly the basis of all that we do in our ELCs.

In our ELCs, our aim is to provide an environment in which the children are able to safely and freely experience the world around them through exploration, inquiry or discovery within a Christ-centred framework. As you will observe over time, our faith and beliefs heavily underpin all areas of our program.

Each precious child is a gift from God and has been created by Him as a unique and special person. All aspects of a child's development are nurtured, including the intellectual, emotional, physical, social and spiritual dimensions.

Early childhood is the beginning of a child's formal education. It is often the first time that children spend time away from their parents/guardians, and is therefore an important part of their preparation for school. The years between 0 and 8 are critically important ones, where a great deal of learning, understanding of the world, language, independence and attitudes develop.

We aim to help each child develop their full potential in three main areas. The Early Years Learning Framework describes childhood as a time of Belonging, Being and Becoming.

Belonging is knowing where and with whom you belong. It is integral to human existence. In fact, God places each child within a family, a cultural group, a neighbourhood and a wider community. A child's sense of belonging grows within these relationships and at our ELCs we value and believe in developing a strong partnership with families in order to support each child's sense of belonging and connectedness.

Being is about living here and now. Childhood is the beginning phase of life. At Chairo, we allow children time to discover God's creation and who they are while engaging in the complexities and joys of relationships, and while meeting the challenges of everyday life.

Becoming reflects the rapid and significant change that occurs in the early years as children learn and grow. At Chairo, we seek to lay a biblical foundation to help shape knowledge and understanding

of what it means to live in God's world, under God's rule and in relationship with Him.

OUR TEACHING AND LEARNING APPROACH

We implement an integrated teaching and learning approach to enable each child to reach their full potential. Our programs allow for times of guided play and learning, adult-led learning, and child-directed play and learning. Our curriculum is characterised by collaborative, effective and reflective practice.

We recognise that each child will learn at different rates, in different ways and at different times, and as such our early learning programs reflect the varied learning styles of individual children.

Young children learn best through activities that are relevant to their lives and varied enough to be challenging and engaging. Children learn as they interact, play, investigate, discover, create and wonder. The ideas that they bring to us are highly valued and the program aims to build on that prior knowledge, being able to have lots of play, especially outdoors, be read to and have time to talk at home, really helps children's learning and provides stimulus for the Early Childhood program.

This type of program is called Play-Based Learning. It is fun, relevant and satisfying for the children because it is tailored to their own level of development. We support children's efforts to construct meaning from the world around them by drawing on their interests and prior knowledge.

The environment is the other teacher and therefore an important part of the learning experience. As this process of interactions, investigation, discovery, creation and wondering works through the day, our Christian teachers and other staff members intentionally present a Christian worldview to the children, explaining from this perspective how things work, why we need to treat each other with love and kindness, and so on.

We provide rich and stimulating experiences that cater for the individual, small group and whole group. As educators, we respond to children's ideas and play, and use intentional teaching to scaffold and extend each child's learning, which is recorded in individual portfolios. An ongoing cycle of planning, documenting and evaluating is undertaken to inform our program.

EARLY LEARNING CENTRE PROGRAMS

Our early learning curriculum is carefully and thoroughly planned by the ELC Team, and at the same time is very flexible to allow for spontaneous learning.

At our ELCS, an emergent approach to curriculum is also used to inform the program. An emergent curriculum is responsive to the interests and needs of the children. The program is therefore flexible, allowing children to make individual choices about their play. Children are encouraged and supported in this decision-making process.

Social interactions are key to children's learning; they provide rich experiences of oral language, visual communication, listening skills, role play, problem-solving, discovery and creativity.

Our actual programs will be clearly displayed in a book located in the entry and electronically on our Linc online portal.



General Information

PAKENHAM ELC TIMETABLE

Monday	<i>Pre-Kinder Kookaburras</i>	<i>9.00 am – 12.00 pm</i>
	<i>Pre-Prep</i>	<i>12.30–3.30 pm fortnightly</i>
Tuesday	<i>Pre-Prep (Green Grass Frogs)</i>	<i>8.45 am – 3.30 pm</i>
Wednesday	<i>Pre-Prep (Swamp Hens)</i>	<i>8.45 am – 3.30 pm</i>
Thursday	<i>Pre-Prep (Green Grass Frogs)</i>	<i>8.45 am – 3.30 pm</i>
Friday	<i>Pre-Prep (Swamp Hens)</i>	<i>8.45 am – 3.30 pm</i>

TERM DATES FOR 2018

Note: ELC term starting dates may vary from school dates.

Term 1:	Tuesday 30 January to Friday 29 March
Term 2:	Wednesday 18 April to Friday 29 June
Term 3:	Thursday 20 July to Friday 22 September
Term 4:	Monday 8 October to Wednesday 12 December

REST TIME

Children will be allocated time to have a rest during our long days. When children have a big day filled with many activities and experiences, we feel it is very important for them to relax and have some time to unwind. At rest time, children will require a cushion for their head. They may wish to bring a small blanket as well. However, these items must go home each day as there is no space to store them at the ELC. The children need to be able to manage these items in and out of a bag, so less is better.

LINC ACCESSING OUR PROGRAM

Linc is our online communication portal from staff members to parents with regard to the program and events in the ELC. It is through Linc that we share our newsletters, weekly diary page and notices about upcoming events. This site will contain any music, YouTube clips, and slideshows of special events.

Being able to interact with your child via Linc is of great educational import. Often parents ask their child, 'What did you learn today?', with the inevitable reply: 'I played'. Being able to access your child's learning gives you the opportunity to engage with your child, building their language, recall and critical thinking. As you engage with your child through Linc, connections between

home and their learning can be established, thus enabling you to extend their learning further. Importantly, Linc gives you the opportunity to contribute to the program.

KEEPING COMMUNICATION LINES OPEN

The Pakenham ELC has its own email address:

pakenhamelc@chairo.vic.edu.au

Email is a great way to share your child's news, such as a family holiday, a new discovery or other important events like a new baby in the family. These photos and news snippets can be shared at the 'show and tell' session during the program using our large computer screen. It is a great way to contribute to the program, thus enhancing the learning of the children.

Other important information to communicate are any changes that have occurred in your child's life. These events could be having a sick sibling, a death in the family or of a pet, as well as an extended family member moving away. Children work through these issues in different ways and, if we are made aware of them, we can assist your child's understanding and resiliency during this time. So, please keep the communication lines open.

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

Our ELC programs commence at 8.45 am. If you arrive before this time, we ask that you please wait with your child in the foyer area. When our teachers open the door to the children's room, please enter with your child and sign them in on the attendance record.

The signing in of your child is a legal requirement and you must accurately record the arrival time of your child and sign your name, as well as record who will be collecting your child on that day. This person needs to be listed on your details form as being authorised to collect your child. Please see a staff member if you need to add someone to your list at any stage throughout the year.

Should the occasion arise that you are not able to collect your child and you have arranged for somebody who is not listed as authorised to collect them, please ring the ELC and speak to your child's teacher. Authorisation may be given over the phone, provided you speak directly with your child's teacher and give details of the person collecting your child. On arrival, they will be asked for identification and their mobile phone number for

verification that they are the person authorised to collect your child. No child will be sent home without this information.

Children must be signed out before leaving. Once again, a signature and an accurate record of the departure time must be completed. This is done while children are seated on the mat. Once the teacher has seen you sign your child out on the attendance record, your child will be dismissed. Please assist the teachers by encouraging your child to wait on the mat until their name is called.

Please ensure that you arrive promptly at the end of each day. It can be very unsettling for young children when they are left waiting after their friends have been dismissed. If you are unavoidably detained, please ensure that you phone the ELC.

HEALTH AND ABSENCE

If your child is unwell, the best place for him/her to recuperate properly is at home, as this minimises the spread of infection. If your child is absent for any reason and/or has an infectious disease, please notify the ELC by phone or email.

MEDICATION AND MEDICAL CONDITIONS

If you require staff members to administer any medication, you must give written permission via the Medication Book. Medication will not be administered unless it is prescribed by a doctor in writing. The medication must be in its original container, displaying the original label. If your child has a medical condition that is ongoing, a Medical Conditions Plan must be completed with your child's teacher. Such medical conditions include asthma, anaphylaxis and diabetes.

IMMUNISATION

Immunisation is one of the best ways to protect yourself and your children, as well as safeguard the health of future generations. At our ELCs, we ask to sight your child's immunisation records and we keep a record of their immunisation status. This is a government requirement so that, if there is an outbreak of a vaccine-preventable disease at the ELC, we can quickly identify those who are at risk of getting the disease, and those who are able to pass the disease on to others, and contact them so they can stay away. This is done to prevent any further spread of the disease and to protect those who are most vulnerable to complications of that disease.

The immunisation laws have been reviewed and changed. This has implications for all enrolments at our ELCs.

The local council in the Pakenham area (Cardinia Shire Council) has information about free vaccines and council immunisation sessions on their website: cardinia.vic.gov.au/immunisation

The Department of Health has a couple of helpful websites with numerous fact sheets about specific vaccinations and answers to frequently asked questions about immunisations, and also provides information in other languages: health.vic.gov.au/immunisation/factsheets.htm and immunise.health.gov.au/internet/immunise/publishing.nsf/Content/frequently-asked-questions

You can also ask your local doctor for advice.

The Immunise Australia Program provides the National Immunisation Program Schedule.

PARENT/VOLUNTEERS AND CHILD SAFETY POLICIES

Parent volunteers form an important part of our ELC community. They contribute in a variety of ways, ranging from directly assisting with the learning of children to making it possible to extend and enrich the learning environment, or simply by providing a service to aid the smooth running of the ELC. For all who give freely of their time, we are particularly grateful.

All volunteers in the ELC environment will be working under the supervision of a member of the teaching staff, whose responsibility it is to be familiar with the *Volunteers Policy* and to ensure that it is followed. Parents who wish to volunteer at ELC for parent duty are required to complete the Chairo Child Safety online course and provide referee contact details. A volunteer's package is included in your child's enrolment pack.

PARENT DUTY

Parental assistance is a vital part of the daily operation of the ELC. It enhances parent/teacher communications and the children enjoy it. By participating on the parent help roster, you get to see first-hand what your child is learning and doing, and you also have the opportunity to discuss your child's progress with their teacher. Your child usually thinks it is very special to have you present as well!

The roster will be emailed to you as a workable document that will save automatically. We expect to roster two parents on each day: one to cover the morning and one to cover the afternoon (or

you may wish to do a full day). If you cannot fulfill your parent duty due to illness or another event, please use the parent contact list to phone or email another parent to ask if they can replace you.

OTHER ASSISTANCE

Any help that parents are able to give to is greatly appreciated and necessary for the smooth functioning of the ELC. Here are some ways in which help is always needed:

- Assisting staff members by helping with cleaning routines, change-over period and supervision of children
- Sharing your own experiences, talents, knowledge and interests with the children
- Joining the Chairo Café or Parent Prayer Support Group
- Assisting the learning of children by being involved in their planned small group activities
- Assisting children with their morning snack
- Organising and participating in social gatherings and fundraising

WHAT TO BRING

School bag: Please select a bag/backpack made of sturdy, lightweight material for carrying items such as lunches and a change of clothes, and a separate bag for their pillow. A library bag will also need to be brought from Term 2 onwards.

Morning snack: Please pack your child's snack for morning tea in a separate named container. This should be a healthy snack such as cheese and biscuits, or a piece of fruit. If you pack a piece of fruit, please have it pre-cut or partially peeled. We want to help the children to develop independent skills at meal times.

Lunch: A healthy lunch in a named container is to be brought each day for four-year-old children. We are **nut free** and therefore do not encourage chocolates, lollies, chips or cake as part of a healthy eating program. If your child has any allergies, you need to advise the staff by completing the relevant forms in the enrolment pack.

When packing lunch for your child, please consider health and nutrition, your child's appetite, and ease of access to food items. Containers, or paper or cloth wraps, are easier for children to open than plastic wraps, and small sealable containers may be better than commercial packs of yoghurt, fruit, etc. Please include a bottle of

water and ensure that all drink bottles, food containers and lunch boxes are clearly labeled with your child's name.

UNIFORM/CLOTHING

Children need practical clothing that is easily maintained, comfortable to move in, easy to manage and adaptable to weather conditions. We provide smocks for all messy or wet activities and will endeavour to keep children clean and dry. However, accidents do happen and it is vital that children are not wearing their 'good clothes' to the ELC.

It is not compulsory for ELC children to wear school uniform. However, if you prefer your child to wear uniform, you are able to purchase this from the uniform shop at the Pakenham Campus, which is open on Mondays (8.30 to 11.30 am) and Wednesdays (1.00 to 5.00 pm). Note: a special ELC windcheater is an optional uniform item.

Please provide three changes of clothing (in a clip lock bag) to be kept in your child's bag in case of accidents for the entire year. Any items of clothing that are likely to be removed during the day must be labeled.

LIBRARY BAG (PARROTS AND KOOKABURRAS)

A library bag is required from Term 2 onwards and these can be purchased from the uniform shop.

TOILETING

It is expected that your child will be toilet-trained before attending our programs. However, we understand that all children have the occasional mishap and we will provide extra assistance to those who require it (e.g. helping to undo fastenings, changing anyone who has an accident).

SUN PROTECTION

Our *Sun Protection Policy* states that all children during Terms 1 and 4 are required to wear a hat that protects their ears, neck and face. It also states that all children must wear clothing that covers their shoulders. Children who do not have a hat to wear during the day, or are wearing shoestring or singlet tops, will play in the shaded area only. You may wish to purchase a school-approved hat from the uniform shop.

Also in Terms 1 and 4, 15+ sunscreen needs to be applied to your child's exposed skin prior to arrival at the ELC. For those children who are at the ELC for the day program, sunscreen will be reapplied at lunchtime by staff members.

FOOTWEAR

Your child's footwear needs to be safe and sturdy, enabling them to participate freely in physical activity. Thongs, crocs and other slip-on shoes do not allow your child to move with ease when climbing, running, balancing or dancing. During the winter months, gumboots can be worn outside with a pair of slippers or slip-on shoes for inside.

JEWELLERY

As jewellery can be easily lost or broken, and badges can be dangerous because of the pin on the back, it is preferable that your child does not wear any of these items to the ELC. If your child has pierced ears, it is preferable that he/she wears stud earrings.

PREPARATION TIMES

Preparation times are before and after sessions. The teacher can make themselves available at the end of a session or on another day to discuss any queries or worries that you may have.

If you would like to arrange a convenient time to meet or a home visit, the ELC Director can be contacted on 5942 5632 (extension 307) or by email.

PRE-PREP FEES

Pre-Prep is funded by the Victorian Government, which funds every four-year-old who attends a kindergarten for fifteen hours per week. However, families should be aware that they can only receive funding for one kindergarten position. If your child attends long day care as well as a standalone kindergarten centre, they receive funding for only one centre. It is illegal to receive funding for a kindergarten session at two different centres.



PRE-KINDER FEES

Pre-Kindergarten sessions are not funded by either the State or Federal Government and are therefore self-funded.

PAYMENT OF FEES

Fee statements are sent to parents quarterly near the start of each term. A variety of payment options are possible, including cash, EFTPOS, cheque, credit card or direct debit. Please ensure that fees are paid by the due date. Please note that excursions and incursions are not included in the fees and separate charges therefore apply.

Holders of Health Care or Concession cards can claim a government rebate by giving a copy of their card to administration at the beginning of the year. This rebate will cover the majority of fees.

If you have any queries relating to fees, please contact the Finance Department at the Drouin Campus. The ELC staff members do not handle financial inquiries or payments.

CELEBRATING BIRTHDAYS

Birthdays are special occasions and we are pleased to celebrate them. It is a good time for your child to celebrate his or her birthday with friends by bringing patty cakes or muffins along to the ELC. Please obtain a form at Reception and have it filled out two weeks prior to your child's birthday if you intend to bring in food. A list of the ingredients must be supplied to comply with food safety regulations.

CONCERNS/QUERIES/COMPLAINTS

You are welcome to bring any concerns, queries or complaints that you have to the ELC Director at an appropriate time. Problems cannot be solved by bottling them up! Please see our Complaints Policy in the foyer of the ELC for more information.



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www.chairo.vic.edu.au

